

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 KINSHA 02964 291037Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 AID-05 AGRE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 SP-02 HA-05
IO-14 FDRE-00 /072 W
-----020422 292110Z /73

R 290841Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8897

INFO AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE POUCH

UNCLAS KINSHASA 2964

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, ETRN, CG

SUBJECT: DROUGHT IN CERTAIN AREAS OF ZAIRE

REF: (A) KINSHASA A-43 (B) BANGUI 0607

1. AS REPORTED REF (A), LOCALIZED AREAS OF ZAIRE, PARTICULARLY THE
BAS ZAIRE REGION, ARE EXPERIENCING DROUGHT CONDITIONS. IN ADDITION
TO AFFECTING FOOD CROPS, THE DROUGHT IS AFFECTING THE RIVER TRANSPORT
SYSTEM.

2. INFORMATION GATHERED FROM ZAIRIAN DOA AND FAO REPS INDICATES THAT
LOCALIZED
DRY CONDITIONS ARE NOT YET CAUSE FOR DROUGHT ALARM. INFORMATION FROM
ONATRA NOTES THAT ZAIRE RIVER LEVEL AT MATADI CURRENTLY IS 21 OR 22
FEET COMPARED WITH NORMAL 25-26 FEET WORKING LEVEL. LOWER WATER
COUPLED WITH INOPERATIVE DREDGE CURRENTLY RESULTS IN HIGHER SILT LEVELS

FORCING SHIPS TO OFF-LOAD PARTIALLY IN BANANA AND/OR BOMA. RIVER LEVEL

AT KINSHASA IS CHARACTERIZED BY ONATRA AS BEING LOWER THAN
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USUAL FOR THIS PERIOD OF THE YEAR. THE UPPER RIVER SYSTEM
IS LOW. GOZ INSTITUTIONS AFFIRM THIS IS NORMAL FOR THE PERIOD.
HOWEVER, AMERICAN CIS DIRECTOR STATES THAT BARGES ON KASAI CAN
BE LOADED ONLY TO HALF NORMAL CAPACITY BECAUSE OF LOW WATER.

3. DOA BUREAU OF STUDIES WITH COUNTERPART FUNDS SUPPORT
CURRENTLY UNDERTAKING PLANNED DATA/STATISTICS GATHERING AT

100 SITES IN ZAIRE. DROUGHT RELATED DATA WILL BE INCLUDED IN SURVEY. USDA PASA REP. WILL PARTICIPATE WITH TEAM IN KASAI REGION AND SPOT CHECK OTHER AREAS.

4. WE SHALL BE INVESTIGATING FURTHER TO DETERMINE FULL EXTENT OF DROUGHT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES. AT THIS TIME, WE MERELY WISH TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THIS POSSIBLE NEW THREAT TO THE ZAIRIAN ECONOMY. WILL ADVISE.

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